

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for transferring computer data from a packed data structure to an  
2 unpacked data structure, the method comprising:
  - (a) declaring a first data structure that a compiler interprets as a packed  
4 data structure, the first data structure having an associated data type;
  - (b) declaring a second data structure that the compiler interprets as an  
6 unpacked data structure;
  - (c) applying the data type associated with the first data structure to a  
8 pointer that references the packed data structure; and
  - (d) copying the computer data from the packed data structure to the  
10 second data structure using the pointer.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein step (c) comprises a cast.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the packed data structure comprises at least two  
2 members of unequal size.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the packed data structure comprises at least one  
2 sub-structure and steps (a)-(d) are performed for the at least one sub-structure.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the first data structure comprises at least one  
2 member having an unsigned character data type.

6. A computer-readable storage medium containing program code for transferring  
computer data from a packed data structure to an unpacked data structure,  
comprising:

a first program segment that declares a first data structure, the first data  
structure having an associated data type, the first data structure being  
interpreted by a compiler as a packed data structure;

a second program segment that declares a second data structure, the  
second data structure being interpreted by the compiler as an unpacked data  
structure;

a third program segment that applies the data type associated with the  
first data structure to a pointer that references the packed data structure; and

a fourth program segment that copies the computer data from the  
packed data structure to the second data structure using the pointer.

7. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 6, wherein the third program  
segment comprises a cast.

8. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 6, wherein the unpacked data  
structure comprises at least one sub-structure and the first, second, third, and  
fourth program segments are applied to the at least one sub-structure.

9. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 6, wherein the first data structure  
comprises at least one member having an unsigned character data type.